



# British Columbia Teachers' Federation

100-550 West 6th Avenue, Vancouver, BC V5Z 4P2 • 604-871-2283, 1-800-663-9163 • [www.bctf.ca](http://www.bctf.ca)  
TTY 604-871-2185 (deaf and hard of hearing) Executive Office fax: 604-871-2290

## EDUCATION FUNDING

*A Brief to the*

### **Select Standing Committee on Finance and Government Services**

*from the*

### **British Columbia Teachers' Federation**

October 2012

---

President

---

Executive Director

# Education Funding Brief 2012

## BC Teachers' Federation

*bctf.ca/BriefsAndPositionPapers.aspx*

### **Our students deserve better**

Students in British Columbia are being shortchanged in comparison to students elsewhere in Canada. The teachers of BC are urgently appealing to the Select Standing Committee on Finance and Government Services to recommend to government sufficient increases in education funding to reverse this situation and provide more educational services to BC students.

We believe these services are vitally important to the students in school now and to the social and economic health of the province in the longer term. In this brief, we will identify how the situation in BC compares to other provinces, and why the government should, as a start, adopt a plan to bring BC's education funding and services up to at the very least the average in Canada.

BC is below the Canadian average in improvements to education funding. This is a situation that should not exist in a province endowed with such natural wealth and human potential. Our students deserve better.

### **Here are some of the facts**

Yes, enrolment has declined in BC over the last decade. Yes, the number of dollars spent on education has increased (see Appendix 1). But this simplistic narrative of fewer kids and more funding doesn't tell the real story. The stark reality is that funding increases have not been large enough to preserve the same levels of service our students had a decade ago.

BC falls further and further behind other provinces in a whole range of indicators. Statistics Canada data shows that all provinces experienced declining enrolment between 2005–06 and 2009–10, except Alberta. Six provinces experienced a greater percentage decrease in student

enrolment than BC. Yet over the same period most other provinces hired more educators to support students. Between 2005–06 and 2009–10, the number of FTE educators **increased** by 5% in Canada and **decreased** by 2% in BC (see Appendix 2). To see the grim realities, take a look at where BC stands in comparison to other provinces in improvements to their education budgets (Table 1).

**Table 1: BC’s rank among provinces—Percentage change in education funding: Statistics Canada indicators, 2005–06 to 2009–10**

Percentage change in funding for elementary and secondary schools between 2005–06 and 2009–10 Type of funding	BC’s rank among provinces: Percent increase in funding (1st=highest & 10th=lowest)
Operating expenditures (in current dollars)	10th
Total expenditures (in current dollars)	10th
Total expenditures per student (in current dollars)	10th
Total expenditures per student (in 2002 constant dollars)	10th
Total expenditures per capita (in current dollars)	10th
Total expenditures per capita (in 2002 constant dollars)	10th
Total expenditures as a percentage of GDP	9th
Total expenditures per student as a percentage of GDP per capita	8th

Source: BCTF Research table with information from Statistics Canada (2011). *Summary Public School Indicators for Canada, the Provinces and Territories, 2005/2006 to 2009/2010*, Charts A.17.2, A.19.2, A.20.1.2, A.20.2.2, A.26.1.2, A.26.2.2, A31.2, A.32.2.

Compared to other provinces, BC provided the lowest **percentage increase** in education funding for six key indicators used by Statistics Canada to measure public school expenditures. (For more information on education spending as a percentage of GDP, see Appendix 3.) Given the freeze on K to 12 education funding announced in Budget 2012, the situation in BC schools will only worsen unless there is a significant change in policy direction.

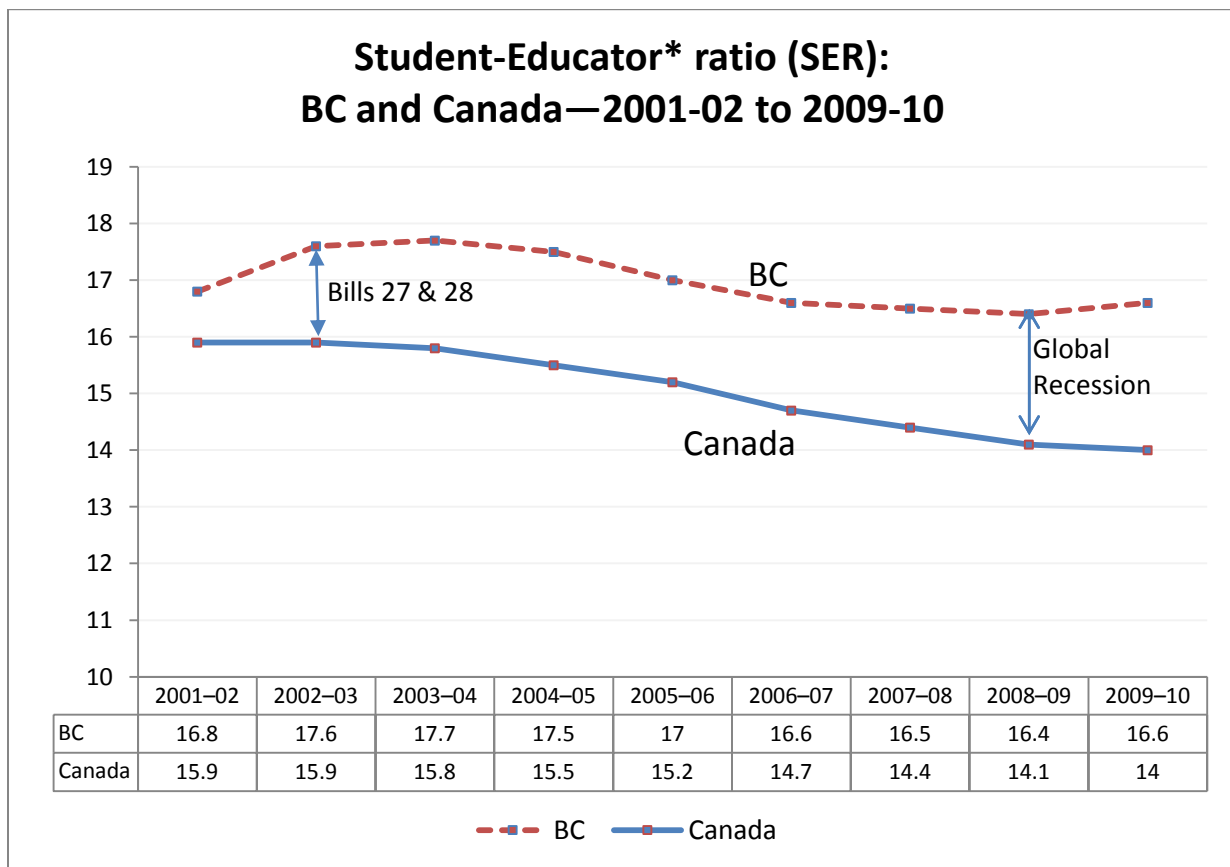
Other provinces have been improving K to 12 funding at a greater rate than BC. Percentage increases in the funding for education in BC have not kept up. It is time to make a change.

## Let's get specific about the losses in services for students

Services to students are affected when the student-educator ratio increases. In BC, increases in the number of students per educator in the system have resulted in losses in services for students. The services affected include: class sizes; support services for students with special needs; counselling services; support for students who are English Language Learners (ELL), whose first language is not English; school libraries; learning assistance for students who need some extra attention. In fact, all student services are affected by the student-educator ratio.

British Columbia had the worst student-educator ratio in Canada in 2009–10 (the most recent year for which national statistics are available).

**Chart 1: Student-Educator ratio (SER): BC and Canada—2001–02 to 2009–10**



**Sources:**

Statistics Canada. (2010). *Summary Public School Indicators for Canada, the Provinces and Territories, 2002/2003 to 2008/2009*. Catalogue no. 81-595-M, No. 088. Table A.14, p. 34.

Statistics Canada. (2011). *Summary Public School Indicators for Canada, the Provinces and Territories, 2005/2006 to 2009/2010*. Catalogue no 81-595-M. No. 095. Table A.14, p. 27.

\* Statistics Canada defines educators as “all employees in the public school system (either school-based or district-based), who belong to one of the three following categories: teachers, school administrators, and pedagogical support.”

**The lack of improvement in student-educator ratios has produced the dilemma facing school boards and schools. We can no longer offer students the following programs and services.**

- **We can't offer students with special needs the services they require**

Despite declining enrolment, the number of students formally assessed and assigned an Individual Education Plan (IEP) actually increased (except for the unfunded Gifted program) by 1,560 in the last decade (see Appendix 4). Students in the highest-need, highest-expenditure category also increased over the decade—by 6,187, to 24,029 students.

These increased numbers should have been matched by increases in the number of teachers who specialize in providing services to students with special needs. Instead, we have lost 752 special education teachers over that same decade (see Appendix 5).

- **We can't identify all the students who have special educational needs**

The reported number of students with special needs considerably understates the number of students who actually have those needs. Designation as having a special need depends on having had an assessment, and there are not enough teachers qualified to give the assessments or enough staff time to do them. In addition, there are many students who need just a bit of extra support in order to achieve a great deal more—the “grey area” students. The potential for success of these students is compromised by too few specialist teachers.

- **English Language Learners (ELL) still need support**

Support for students whose home language is not English is essential if they are to achieve their potential. Older students who are learning English need additional help to develop the deeper grasp of the language necessary for academic achievement at the secondary and post-secondary levels. A third of all ELL teachers have been lost—a decline of 340 teachers over the last decade—even though the number of ELL students has increased (see Appendices 5 and 6).

- **Students need counsellors to help them cope with the many stresses of home, school, and social life**

We increasingly recognize that mental health challenges are a part of what keeps some students from achieving all that they could. The number of counsellors in the system dropped by 117 over the past decade, while the demand for their assistance has increased (see Appendix 5).

- **We need to pay more attention to the needs of Aboriginal students**

It is not acceptable to continue to have a school-completion rate for Aboriginal students that is some 30% lower than that of non-Aboriginal students. The number of students identified as Aboriginal has grown substantially over the last decade—from 46,885 to 61,399. Despite this growth, the number of Aboriginal Education teachers has declined slightly (see Appendices 5 and 7).

- **Facing the demands of rapid change and new technology, libraries and teacher-librarians are needed now more than ever**

The number of teacher-librarians has declined by 30% over the last decade—yet information literacy has become more complex and more important (see Appendix 5). Many schools, even large secondary schools, now have no professional in the library and doors are closed too frequently, significantly reducing learning opportunities for all.

Research has shown that the most significant indicator of success in reading, in schools, is the presence of a qualified teacher-librarian, yet over the past decade, BC schools experienced a loss of about 250 FTE teacher-librarians (see Appendix 5).

- **Class size and class composition**

The steady loss of teaching positions means overcrowded classes with a more complex composition of students with broad ranges of need. The number of classes in BC public schools declined by 3,866 between 2007–08 and 2011–12, while 12,651 classes violated ministry guidelines and had four or more designated students with special needs.

## **More demands and less flexibility**

The losses of the services identified here are inevitable consequences of increasing demands and inadequate resources.

Teachers and schools face many new demands in terms of the social, emotional, physical, and intellectual health of children and youth. For example, the new ERASE antibullying strategy requires time for developing policies and carrying them out at the school level. The advocate for children and families calls for a designated person at each school to support students who are in care. The ministry's "BC Education Plan" calls for significant changes in curriculum and classroom practice.

All of these and much more is demanded—and rightly so. Teachers want to play an important role in improving our public education system and making our schools safe, caring communities of learning. But each unfunded demand inevitably sacrifices something elsewhere. Class-size regulations ring hollow when government funding is insufficient to permit compliance. The contradiction between the regulations and the funding puts boards of trustees in the unenviable position of choosing which services to cut and which to spare in each budget year.

Students and teachers are left to feel the loss of valuable services, without the capacity to develop or engage in exciting new approaches.

## **Make a plan**

We don't expect that the ground lost over the past years can be immediately regained. But we do believe that there must be a change in direction and a plan for improvements over the next several years. Now is the time to make that plan and for the committee to recommend it to government.

A benchmark for improvement is the average in Canada. We would obviously like to be above the national average in improvements to education funding. Parents in BC expect a high-quality public education system, and will not, in the long run, be satisfied with an "average" system. We believe that a realistic initial goal is to move up to the national average in the various indicators of educational funding.

There is no valid excuse for British Columbia to follow a decade of reducing educational services, with a continuation of that practice.

We want to be able to say to the public, and our students, that things are improving, that they can expect to get back at least some of the reduced or eliminated services.

As a start, we are asking the committee to recommend to government, a plan to meet the target of bringing BC up to the national average, for:

- the percentage increase in operating expenditures, as seen between 2005–06 and 2009–10 (current dollars): Cost: about \$377 million (see Appendix 8).
- K to 12 funding as a percentage of GDP (2009–10): Cost: \$609 million (see Appendix 9).
- Student-educator ratio (2009–10): 5,800 FTE teachers; Cost: \$500 million (see Appendix 10).

## **Bring in the taxation necessary to support the plan**

Universally accessible, quality public services are essential for an equitable and healthy society. We recognize that not only education, but also other public services, have been inadequately funded over the last decade. We call for improvements in education funding, not by reducing other public services, but by increasing taxes to generate the necessary revenue needed to adequately meet the needs in the range of public services (see Appendix 11).

The environment, for reduced public services, was set by a 25% income tax cut in 2001. When taxes are inadequate to support the services that keep a society healthy, then bad decisions are made, which have a higher cost in the long term.

Lowering of taxes for those at the top income levels has had the impact of increasing inequality in income distribution in British Columbia. Taxes should serve the function of decreasing inequality, as well as providing quality services. As the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives has identified, inequality is bad for the economy, exacerbates many social problems, damages the environment, and weakens democracy because it is harmful to social cohesion.<sup>1</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> Klein, S. (2012). *The costs of inequality and the role of taxes: The case for progressive tax reform in BC*. Vancouver, BC: Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives. Presentation made in July; available online at <http://www.policyalternatives.ca/sites/default/files/uploads/publications/BC%20Office/2012/07/CCPA-BC-Inequality-Taxes-slides.pdf>.



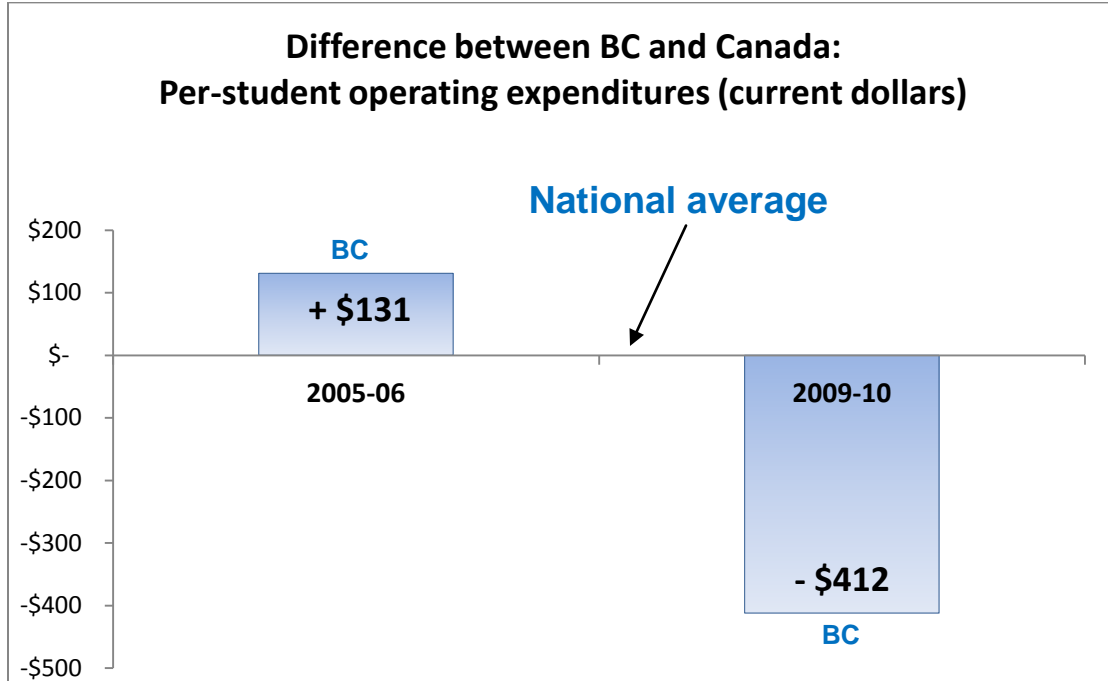
Public education is a public good; it provides economic, social, and cultural benefits to our society as a whole. Only well-educated citizens can make their best contribution to dynamic communities, a thriving economy, and a vibrant democracy.

In conclusion, we urge the committee recommend to the government, a plan to increase the funding support for education in BC initially to at least the average in Canada, and to make the taxation decisions that would provide the funding for the plan. Our children deserve better than we can currently provide for them.

## Appendix 1

### Per-student operating expenditures in BC and Canada, 2005–06 and 2009–10

Chart 2: Difference between BC and Canada: Per-student operating expenditures



Source: BCTF calculations with data from Statistics Canada (2011). *Summary of Public School Indicators for the Provinces and Territories, 2005–06 to 2009–10*, Table A.22, Catalogue no. 81-595-M. No. 095. p. 36.

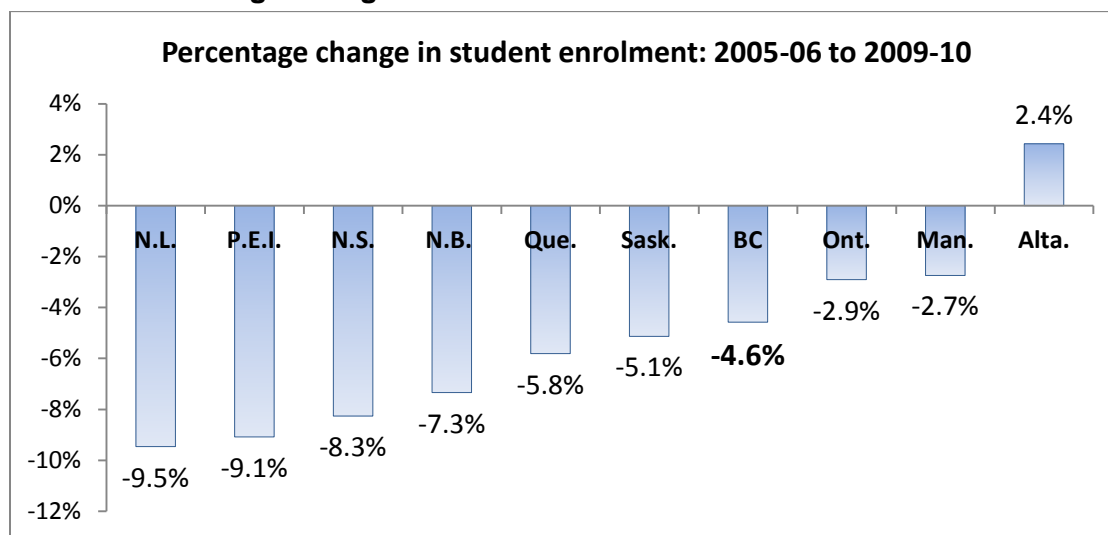
## Appendix 2

### Other provinces increased support for students (FTE educators) during enrolment decline

The BC Ministry of Education repeatedly justifies underfunding by claiming the government is providing “more funding than ever for fewer students than ever.” Enrolment decline is not a justification for underfunding public schools. A period of enrolment decline is an opportunity to address unmet needs in public schools. Other provinces have done so—why not BC?

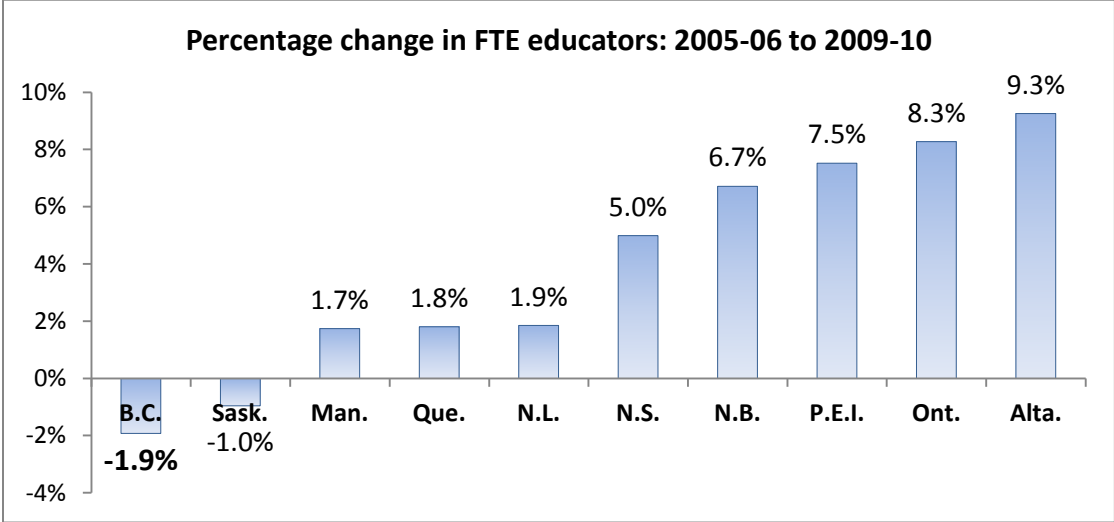
Statistics Canada data shows that all of the provinces experienced declining enrolment between 2005–06 and 2009–10, except Alberta. Six provinces experienced a greater percentage decrease in student enrolment than BC. Yet most other provinces hired more educators to support students. Overall, the number of FTE educators in Canada increased by 5% between 2005–06 and 2009–10, yet in BC, FTE educators decreased by 2%.

**Chart 3: Percentage change in student enrolment: 2005–06 to 2009–10**



BCTF calculations with figures from: Statistics Canada (2011). *Summary of Public School Indicators for the Provinces and Territories, 2005–06 to 2009–10*, Table A.2.1, p. 10.

**Chart 4: Percentage change in FTE educators: 2005–06 to 2009–10**



BCTF calculations with figures from: Statistics Canada (2011). *Summary of Public School Indicators for the Provinces and Territories, 2005–06 to 2009–10*, Table A.13.1, p. 25.

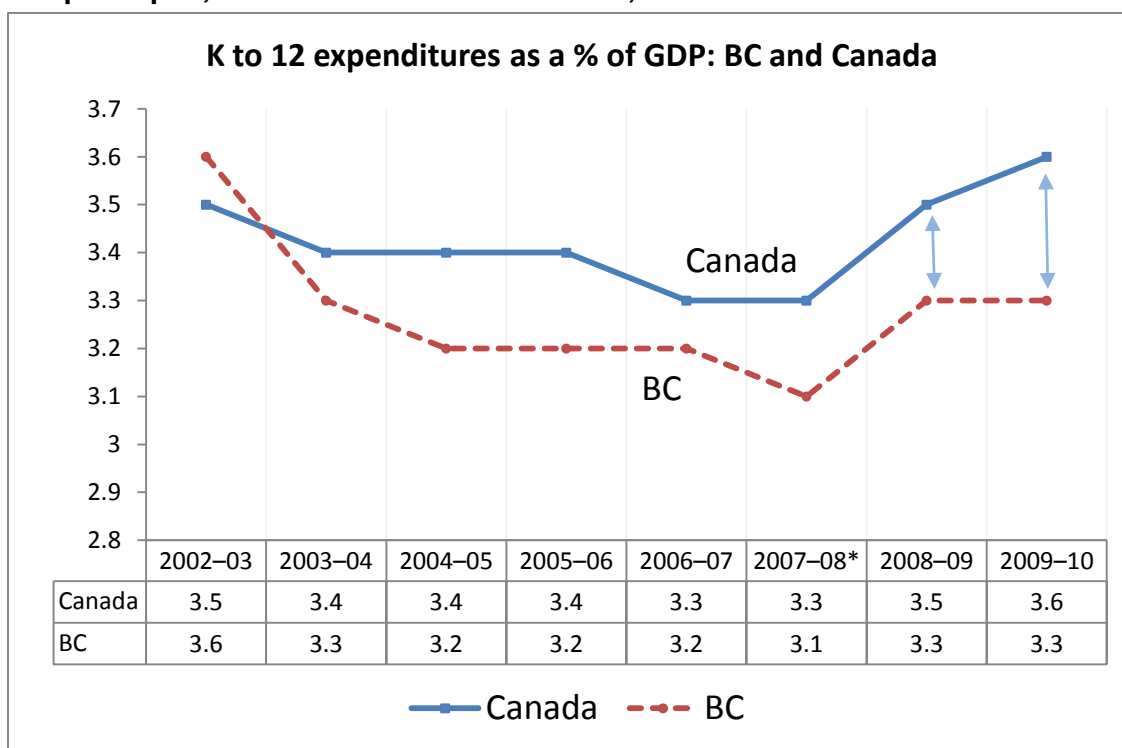
### Appendix 3

## BC falls behind in K to 12 education spending as a percentage of GDP

BC spent a higher percentage of gross domestic product (GDP) on public education than Canada as a whole in 2002–03. Since then, BC has fallen behind the rest of Canada. Total expenditures in public elementary and secondary schools, as a percentage of the GDP, decreased in BC from 3.6% in 2002–03 to 3.3% in 2003–04, and remains at 3.3% in 2009–10—a direct result of Liberal government funding policies.

After the global recession in 2008, K to 12 expenditures as a percent of GDP for Canada increased to 3.6% in 2009–10, while remaining stagnant at 3.3% for BC, widening the gap between BC and Canada, and leaving BC public schools relatively worse off than those in the rest of the country.

**Chart 5: Total expenditures in public elementary and secondary schools as a percentage of GDP per capita, Canada and British Columbia, 2002–03 to 2009–10**



Source: BCTF Research chart with data from Statistics Canada.

For 2002–03 to 2006–07 figures, see the 2010 Statistics Canada report, *Summary Public School Indicators for Canada, the Provinces and Territories, 2002/2003 to 2008/2009*. Catalogue no. 81-595-M, No. 088. Table.A.27, p. 37.

For 2007–08 to 2009–10 figures, see the 2011 Statistics Canada report, *Summary Public School Indicators for Canada, the Provinces and Territories, 2005/2006 to 2009/2010*. Catalogue no 81-595-M. No. 095. Table A.31, p. 46.

\* Statistics Canada adjusted the 2007–08 figure for BC from 3.2% in the 2010 report to 3.1% in the 2011 report.

## Appendix 4

### More students with special needs despite declines in total student enrolment (without Gifted\*)

**Table 2: Number of students (public only) (without Gifted)**

	2001–02	2005–06	2011–12	# change, 2001–02 to 2011–12	% change, 2001–02 to 2011–12
Headcount	630,049	599,492	569,728	-60,321	-9.6%
Special Needs (without Gifted)	48,937	49,695	50,497	+1,560	+3.2%

Sources: 2002–03 to 2011–12: *2011/12 Summary of Key Information*, p. 2; 2001–02, *2010/11 Summary of Key Information*, p. 2.

**Table 3: Enrolment changes, students with special needs, 2001–02 to 2011–12**

Type of special need by designation	2001–02	2005–06	2011–12	# change since 2001–02	% change since 2001–02
<b>Increase in students with special needs since 2001–02</b>					
Autism Spectrum Disorder (G)	1,523	2,593	5,916	+4,393	+288.4%
Learning disabilities (Q)	14,804	16,703	18,174	+3,370	+22.8%
Physical disability/ Chronic health impairment (D)	4,517	5,827	7,035	+2,518	+55.7%
Deafblind (B)	46	48	62	+16	+34.8%
<b>Decrease in students with special needs since 2001–02</b>					
Behaviour disabilities (H, R)	19,002	16,833	13,065	-5,937	-31.2%
Mild intellectual disability (K)	3,862	2,751	2,217	-1,645	-42.6%
Sensory disabilities (E, F)	1,955	1,797	1,483	-472	-24.1%
Moderate to profound intellectual disability (C)	2,455	2,457	1,978	-477	-19.4%
Physically dependent (A)	773	686	567	-206	-26.6%
<b>Totals</b>	<b>48,937</b>	<b>49,695</b>	<b>50,497</b>	<b>+1,560</b>	<b>+3.2%</b>

BCTF Research table created with data from BC Ministry of Education: *Student Statistics 2001–02 to 2005–06 Full Year Summary Report*, December 2005, p. 5; *Student Statistics—2009/10, 2010/11, 2011/12* January 2010, 2011, and 2012, p. 2.

\* Note: Tables 2 and 3 show the change in the composition of students with special needs in all categories except Gifted. It is important to note that although there are 10,236 fewer students in the Gifted program in 2011–12 than in 2001–02, this decrease likely reflects a loss of services to support students in the Gifted program, not necessarily fewer students in need of services. Most of the decreases in other categories also probably reflect lack of formal identification, not a decline in student needs.

## Appendix 5

### Loss of specialist teachers

Table 4: Change in FTE positions by type of specialist teacher: 2001–02 to 2011–12 (est.)

FTE specialist teachers	2001–02	2007–08	2011–12 (est.)	Change since 2007–08		Change since 2001–02	
				FTE	Percent	FTE	Percent
Library Services	921.8	730	647.62	<b>-82.38</b>	<b>-11.3%</b>	<b>-274.18</b>	<b>-29.7%</b>
Counselling	989.6	915.8	872.0	<b>-43.80</b>	<b>-4.8%</b>	<b>-117.60</b>	<b>-11.9%</b>
Special Education	4,051.5	3,446.5	3,299.02	<b>-147.48</b>	<b>-4.3%</b>	<b>-752.48</b>	<b>-18.6%</b>
English Language Learning	1,015.6	788.7	672.99	<b>-115.71</b>	<b>-14.7%</b>	<b>-342.61</b>	<b>-33.7%</b>
Aboriginal Education	206.9	193.4	204.83	<b>+11.43</b>	<b>+5.9%</b>	<b>-2.06</b>	<b>-1.0%</b>
<b>Total of above</b>	<b>7,185.4</b>	<b>6,074.4</b>	<b>5,696.46</b>	<b>-377.94</b>		<b>-1,488.93</b>	

BCTF Research table, with figures from BC Ministry of Education (2002, 2008), *Staff by Year and Program Code* (unpublished Form 1530 data). 2011–12 estimates from BC Ministry of Education Revenue and Expenditure tables: *Table 10: 2011/12 annual budget provincial summary of FTE employees by type of employee and program*, available at: <http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/accountability/district/revenue/1112/pdf/table10.pdf>.

## Appendix 6

### Increase in English Language Learners (ELL)

Student enrolment in the English Language Learning program (public schools) increased by 2,737 students over the decade, from 59,343 students in 2001–02 to 62,080 students in 2011–12. About twice as many students (135,651) live in families where the primary language spoken at home is other than English, an increase of 16,874 students since 2001–02 and 8,676 students since 2007–08 (see Table 5). In 2011–12, 10,349 classes in BC public schools have 4 or more students designated as English Language Learning/English as a Second Dialect<sup>2</sup>.

**Table 5: Change in enrolment—English Language Learning and primary language spoken a home, 2001–02 to 2011–12**

Student group	School year				Change	
	2001–02	2007–08	2010–11	2011–12	Since 2001–02	Since 2007–08
ELL students	59,343	60,266	61,344	62,080	+2,737	+1,814
Primary language spoken at home is other than English	118,777	126,975	135,614	135,651	+16,874	+8,676

BCTF Research table; 2001–02 figures from BC Ministry of Education (2011), *2010/11 Summary of Key Information*, pp. 14, 16; 2002–03 to 2011–12 figures from BC Ministry of Education (2012), *2011/12 Summary of Key Information*, pp. 14, 16. See *Reporting on K to 12*, <http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/reporting/>, for *Summary of Key Information* online.

---

<sup>2</sup> *Overview of Class Size and Composition in BC Schools*; 2011–12 figures are available at [http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/reports/pdfs/class\\_size/2011/public.pdf](http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/reports/pdfs/class_size/2011/public.pdf).



## Appendix 7

### Growth in Aboriginal student population

- Over the last decade, self-identified Aboriginal student enrolment in public schools has grown by 14,514 students, with enrolment increasing from 46,885 students in 2000–01 to 61,399 students in 2011–12.

BC Ministry of Education (2012), *2011/12 Summary of Key Information*, “Aboriginal Students, 2002/03 to 2011/12 (Public and Independent)”, p. 10, and *2009/10 Summary of Key Information*, “Aboriginal Students, 2000/01 to 2009/10 (Public and Independent)”, p. 10.

- In 2011–12, Aboriginal students comprised 10.8% of all public school students in BC.

BC Ministry of Education (2012), *Student Statistics 2011/12: Province—Public and independent schools combined*, Headcount, p. 1.

- Staffing has minimally declined (-1.0%) over the same period.

## Appendix 8

### What if BC increased operating expenditures (current dollars) by the same percentage as Canada between 2005–06 and 2009–10?

Between 2005–06 and 2009–10, total operating expenditures for public elementary and secondary schools increased by 19.1% in Canada compared to only 11.8% in BC.

**Table 6: Change in operating expenditures (current dollars): 2005–06 to 2009–10**

	Operating expenditures (current dollars, in millions)	
	Canada	BC
2005–06	\$43,043.8	\$5,134.5
2009–10	\$51,257.1	\$5,738.3
\$ change	<b>\$8,213.3</b>	<b>\$603.8</b>
Percentage change	<b>19.1%</b>	<b>11.8%</b>

Source: BCTF calculations with data from Statistics Canada (2011). *Summary of Public School Indicators for the Provinces and Territories, 2005–06 to 2009–10*, Table A.17, p. 30.

If operating expenditures for BC public elementary and secondary schools increased by the same percentage as the Canadian average (19.1%) between 2005–06 and 2009–10, there would be \$377 million in additional funding for BC public schools.

**Table 7: Change in operating expenditures (current dollars) in 2009–10, if BC increased funding by the same percentage as Canada between 2005–06 and 2009–10**

Actual operating expenditures (current dollars) for BC in 2005–06	\$5,134.5 million
Dollar increase to operating expenditures if BC increased funding by the same percentage as Canada (+19.1%)	+\$980.7 million
Operating expenditures (current dollars) in 2009–10	
If operating expenditures increased by 19.1%	<b>\$6,115.2 million</b>
Actual operating expenditures (+11.8%)	\$5,738.3 million
Difference between target and actual	<b>+\$376.9 million</b>

Source: BCTF calculations with data from Statistics Canada (2011). *Summary of Public School Indicators for the Provinces and Territories, 2005–06 to 2009–10*, Table A.17, p. 30.

## Appendix 9

### What if BC spent the same percentage of GDP on public schools as Canada in 2009–10?

In 2009–10, BC spent a considerably lower proportion of the GDP on total expenditures for public schools (3.3%) compared to the national average (3.6%). In 2010, BC's GDP was \$203 billion<sup>3</sup>. If BC had spent the same proportion of the GDP on total expenditures<sup>4</sup> for public elementary and secondary schools as the Canadian average (3.6%) in 2010, approximately \$600 million more dollars<sup>5</sup> would be available for BC public schools.

**Table 8: How much additional funding would be available if BC spent the same percentage of the GDP on public elementary and secondary schools as Canada (3.6%) instead of 3.3%?**

<b>GDP—BC 2010 (Market prices)</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Total expenditures for K to 12 public schools</b>
\$203,147,000,000	3.6%	\$7,313,292,000
\$203,147,000,000	3.3%	\$6,703,851,000
<b>Difference</b>		<b>\$609,441,000</b>

Sources:

BC 2010 GDP: BC Stats. (2012). *Infoline Report*. August 10, Issue 12-32. Available online at <http://www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca/Publications/PeriodicalsReleases/Infoline.aspx>.

Total K to 12 expenditures as a % of GDP: Statistics Canada. (2011). *Summary Public School Indicators for Canada, the Provinces and Territories, 2005/2006 to 2009/2010*. Catalogue no 81-595-M. No. 095. Table A.31, p. 46.

<sup>3</sup> Figure for 2010 GDP (Market prices) for BC of \$203,147,000,000 is from BC Stats. *Infoline Report*. August 10, 2012, Issue 12-32.

<sup>4</sup> Note: Total expenditures include operating expenditures, annual capital expenditures, and interest on debt services.

<sup>5</sup> BCTF calculations: Calculated the difference in total expenditures on public elementary and secondary schools, if BC spent 3.3% or 3.6% of the GDP on public schools. 2009–10 SER for Canada: from Statistics Canada (2011), p. 46.

## Appendix 10

### What if BC achieved the same student-educator ratio as Canada in 2009–10?

In 2009–10, there were 33,054 FTE educators in BC. If BC aimed for the same student-educator ratio as the Canadian average (14.0), there would be 6,100 more FTE educators to support students in 2009–10.

**Table 9: Potential number of FTE educators in BC if the student-educator ratio (SER) in BC were based on the ratio for Canada (14.0), 2009–10**

	BC FTE student enrolment	Student-Educator ratio, 2009–10	Number of BC FTE educators, based on the ratio
BC	548,153	16.6	33,054
Canada		14.0	39,154
Difference: Additional FTE educators if BC had the same SER as Canada			+6,100

Source: BCTF calculations with data from:

Statistics Canada. (2011). *Summary Public School Indicators for Canada, the Provinces and Territories, 2005/2006 to 2009/2010*, available at: <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/81-595-m/81-595-m2011095-eng.pdf>

2009–10 FTE enrolment figures (548,153): Table A.2.1, p. 10.

2009–10 SER figure for BC and Canada: Table A.14, p. 27.

2009–10 FTE educators in BC (33,054): Table A.13.1, p. 25.

Educators include teachers and school administrators. Teachers make up about 95% of all educators in BC. Thus, maintaining the same SER in BC as in Canada (national average), would create about 5,800 new FTE teaching positions<sup>6</sup> across the province for a cost of \$500 million.

**Table 10: Cost estimate for an additional 5,800 FTE teaching positions if BC's student-educator ratio is brought up to the national average**

Number of additional FTE teachers (out of 6,100 educators)	5,800
Average teacher total compensation per teacher*	\$86,172
Total cost	\$499,797,600

\* Estimate for average total teacher compensation is based on 2009–10 figures provided by BCPSEA in costing of bargaining proposals

<sup>6</sup> BCTF calculations with 2011–12 figures for FTE teachers and educators from: Ministry of Education (2012). *2011/12 Teacher Statistics*, pp. 3, 6.

## Appendix 11

### BC taxation policies erode funding for public education

#### Loss of public schools funding to private sector

- BC government requires school districts to purchase carbon offsets from a Crown Corporation Pacific Carbon Trust, which uses the funds for private-sector projects. Surrey (\$496,892) and Vancouver (\$406,094) each paid almost half-a-million dollars in carbon offsets in 2010.

Barrett, T. (2011). "Why the Pacific Carbon Trust draws political heat." *The Tyee*. December 5. <http://thetyee.ca/News/2011/12/05/CarbonTrustDrawsHeat/>

- Bob Simpson, Independent MLA for Cariboo North, called on the Legislature (March 5, 2012) to restore the corporate industrial school tax that Gordon Campbell cut in 2008 and direct the additional tax revenue to K to 12 education. This would result in an additional \$228 million education funding over the next three years and at least \$80 million dollars annually thereafter.

McGowan, R. (2012). "BC can afford to put more money into schools." *Burnaby NewsLeader* (letter to the editor). March 9. <http://www.burnabynewsleader.com/opinion/letters/142126793.html>

Smith, C. (2012). "MLA and former teacher Bob Simpson condemns BC Liberal government's approach to education". *Straight.com*. March 6. <http://www.straight.com/article-624641/vancouver/mla-and-former-teacher-bob-simpson-condemns-bc-liberal-governments-approach-education>

#### Radical shift in BC taxation policy undermines funding for public services

A recent budget analysis, by the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives (CCPA), reported that between 2000 and 2010:

- The share of provincial government revenues coming from personal income tax dropped by nearly one-third.
- The shift in income taxation policy benefited the richest 20% of BC households the most.
- Corporate income taxes have decreased from 16.5% to 10%.
- BC's taxation revenues as a percentage of GDP decreased by 1.7%, amounting to a loss of \$3.4 billion to the provincial treasury.

- According to the CCPA, this extra \$3.4 billion in government revenues would be enough to balance the BC budget and pay for much-needed public services.

Lee, M., Ivanova, I., & Klein, S. (2011). *BC's regressive tax shift: A decade of diminishing tax fairness, 2000 to 2010*. Vancouver, BC: Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives. Available online at [http://www.policyalternatives.ca/sites/default/files/uploads/publications/BC%20Office/2011/06/CCPA\\_BC\\_regressive\\_tax\\_shift.pdf](http://www.policyalternatives.ca/sites/default/files/uploads/publications/BC%20Office/2011/06/CCPA_BC_regressive_tax_shift.pdf)

BCTF. (2011). *Education Funding: A brief to the Select Standing Committee on Finance and Government Services*. Available online at <http://www.bctf.ca/uploadedFiles/Public/Publications/Briefs/2011EdFundingBrief.pdf>

## **Views of Canadians on taxation policy to address income inequality and protect public services**

EnviroNics Research surveyed a representative sample of 2,000 Canadians, on behalf of the Broadbent Institute, about their views on income inequality and taxation policy. The survey results suggest Canadians are very concerned about the widening income gap in Canada and support taxation policies that protect public services and reduce income inequality. Of the survey respondents:

- Two-thirds are willing to pay slightly higher taxes to protect social programs.
- 83% support higher taxes for the wealthiest Canadians.
- 73% support gradually increasing corporate tax rates to 2008 levels.
- 69% support an inheritance tax of 35% on any estate valued above \$5 million.

Broadbent Institute. (2011). *Equality Project*. Available online at <http://www.broadbentinstitute.ca/sites/default/files/uploaded-manually/equality-project.pdf>